Medical experiments on animals

*400. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Department of Animal Welfare has asked the National Institute of Virology, to stop its experiments on all animals;

(b) if so, the details of this decision;

(c) the reasons for the decision; and

(d) whether this decision would hamper the NIVs on-going research on developing AIDS vaccine and other experiments?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) During inspection by the nominees of CPCSEA on 8th May, 2002, it was noted that there was violation of Guidelines of Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) formulated by a sub-committee headed by Secretary, Department of Biotechnology in terms of light, ventilation, hygiene and movement space for the animals. Therefore, thirty nine animals of the institute have since been moved in facilities outside the Institute. Efforts are on to provide appropriate facilities of housing and health care of animals at the institute so that research work continues.

Funds for rice research

2491. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press report which appeared in the Hindu dated the 26th June, 2002 under the heading, "Funds crunch hits rice research";

(b) if so, whether the tight squeeze on funding by developed countries has severely hit research programme of the Manila-based International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in rainfed varieties of rice, that are resistant to drought, floods and salinity;

(c) if so, the reasons for the same; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to provide funds, so that it does not hit rice research work in the Institution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Due to the tight squeeze on funding by developed countries, IRRI have initiated staff reductions that will result in a 30% reduction in unrestricted core funds used for personnel costs, Personnel costs make up 52% of IRRI's current budget and thus this is an area in which IRRI proposes to reduce its cost in order to balance its budget. Budgets for governance, over-head, research support and technical support will all be reduced by about an average 15%. These reductions in staff and funds for operations may have an effect on the output from IRRI.

(d) IRRI is a Philippines-based International Organization and is one of the 16 Centres of Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). India is one of the 43 donor members of CGIAR and contributes US $ 7.5 lakhs annually to the various Centres of CGIAR. Of this, IRRI gets a share of US$ 1.5 lakhs annually constituting 20% of the total contribution. Since the annual budget of IRRI is almost US $ 30.00 million, it is not possible for India alone to make up for the squeeze on funding by the developed nations.

Production of vegetables

2492. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated production of vegetables per year in the country;

(b) whether a large quantity of vegetables get perished every year;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to prevent the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The estimated production of vegetables in the country during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 was 87.53 million tonnes and 90.83 million tonnes respectively.